

MINUTES
RSA/VR and ADE/ESS Interagency Workgroup
May 8, 2002

The RSA/VR and ADE/ESS Interagency Workgroup held a meeting at the Arizona Department, 1535 W. Jefferson, Room 417, from 9:00 am to 10:00 am (new members only) and 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Skip Bingham
Harriet Caruso
Bob Koster (for Andres Renteria)
Karen Davis
Chris Harmon
Amy Henning
Barbara Knox
Bill McQueary
Peggy Mejia
Steve Mishlove
Lawrence Powers
Bill Rabe
Velma Spencer
Pete Vargas, Jr.
Craig Warren
Robert Wolf

Others Present:

Wendy Collison
Chris Fuller
Jeannette Zemeida

Overview with New Members

Chris Fuller, Dept. of Economic Services welcomed Harriet Caruso, Amy Henning and Pete Vargas, Jr., the new members of the workgroup. Introductions were made.

Wendy Collison, Arizona Department of Education briefly explained how members were chosen for the workgroup. Wendy and Chris went over the contents of the members' notebooks, which included the RSA/ESS IGA. Wendy talked about the highlights of the February 13, 2002 meeting and went over what the workgroup's responsibilities will be.

Welcome and Introductions

Steve Mishlove, Arizona Dept. of Education and Skip Bingham, RSA, welcomed the group and introduced themselves.

Each individual present introduced themselves and the agency they represent.

Two students have been chosen to participate in the workgroup. However, neither of them was able to attend the meeting. Pete Vargas, Jr. will be looking for a student to fill another student slot. Robert Wolf will also look for another student.

Survey Results and Development of Action Plan

A survey regarding awareness of the Interagency Agreement between RSA and ADE was sent out to the special education directors of schools, school districts and charter schools. Wendy supplied the group with the results of the survey.

Out of 187 respondents, 139 reported that they had not heard of the IGA. The majority of the responses were from charter schools. Some members felt that the overwhelming negative response could be because while not all districts work with this IGA some might not have connected it to the questionnaire. Others felt that perhaps the results were based on the fact that those special education directors who were newer might not be aware of the agreement while those with experience would be aware of the agreement. The group went over the results and brainstormed ideas in response to the survey answers.

An idea presented in response to those surveys that stated they had not heard of the IGA was to give a presentation about the IGA at the Directors Institute. Bill Rabe/Bill McQueary (Peoria USD), Pete Vargas, Jr. (VR) and Velma Spencer volunteered to work on the presentation.

During a discussion concerning Question #2 on the survey, Pete Vargas, Jr. and Larry Powers volunteered to bring copies of the current Letters of Understanding with schools to share with the workgroup at the next meeting.

Chris Harmon and Larry Powers will bring sample curriculums (related to question 2) to the next meeting.

Following the survey brainstorming session, group members discussed materials that are supplied to schools to promote VR. There was also a discussion regarding materials that are provided to parents of special needs students explaining their rights.

Subcommittee Updates

Follow-up Services

Bill McQueary gave the report for his subcommittee on follow-up services. He gave everyone a background and history of schools'/districts' attempts to follow-up with special education students once they had graduated or aged out. Follow-up services have been removed from school YTP contracts with RSA per the Attorney General's office. Bill supplied everyone with a copy of his report regarding follow-up services.

Bill and Chris Harmon answered questions from the group regarding the report and RSA's role in follow-up services.

Group discussed ways to continue services/assistance to students once they have left school and the cost of continuing those services.

Chris Fuller gave the group the history of why follow-up services were removed from RSA's contracts. The Attorney General's office informed them that schools/districts could not be required to provide follow-up services.

The question was asked "Do we want to get an updated Attorney General's opinion on the subject of follow-up services?" Steve Mishlove said he would talk with the ESS attorney in the AG's office to get more information on this subject.

Charter Concerns

Wendy presented the group with the report done by the Charter subcommittee. This subcommittee looked at the inequities of charter school students being served when there are no VR agreements with charter schools.

Developing legislative language to allow charter schools to enter third party agreements would take a long time so the subcommittee, in a teleconference call, discussed the possibility of using a Memo of Understanding with charter schools.

Chris Harmon read a memo from the AG's office to Craig Warren, dated Feb. 23, 1995. The memo stated "It is our opinion that a charter school may not enter into an ISA or IGA with DES, without change to existing legislation."

Karen Davis pointed out that the opinion was written in the same year as charter legislation was approved. She thought there has been more clarification about whether charter schools are public schools since that opinion came out. She felt that this should be revisited and ask for a new opinion.

The subcommittee will be meeting again before the next Interagency Meeting and will bring their ideas for change at that time. They felt that a Memo of Understanding would be a good tool in the meantime.

Youth Transition Programs

Wendy has received calls from a lot of schools with concerns regarding the YTP. A lot of schools are feeling disconnected now that Interact has sunsetted. Pete suggested that ADE involvement would help.

Chris Fuller explained the training she does with the schools involved in YTP. Despite the amount of trainings she supplies she is not sure all schools understand the program.

There was a discussion about YTP's in various regions around the state.

Pete Vargas suggested that a representative from ADE be physically present at IGA meetings. Wendy informed him that ADE has to be invited in order to know when the meetings are being held.

Wendy discussed the transition training that was held in March regarding transition in IEPs. Another one will be held in October for those schools/districts that were unable to attend in March.

Other Issues, Concerns, Questions

The possibility of including the parents of the students in the group was discussed.

Alternatives to meeting in Phoenix face-to-face were discussed. Videoconferencing was considered as an alternative. Another possibility discussed was moving the meeting to different locations from time to time.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting will be held Sept. 11, 2002, 10 am – 3:00 pm. Location: **Prescott Unified School District Boardroom, 146 S. Granite St.** (Granite and Goodwin, 1 block W. of Courthouse).

Agenda items: Charter Issue; Subcommittee Updates

1. Are you aware of the agreement between RSA and ADE regarding students transitioning from school to work?

- ♦ Resend agreement
 - o Synopsis: Benefits to students
 - o Put on ADE/ESS website (PowerPoint presentation)
 - o Listserv
 - (1) Charter (*Pete*)
 - (2) Special education directors
- ♦ Who has been trained?
 - o Retrain on agreement
- ♦ Present at Directors Institute
 - o *Peoria USD*
 - o *Pete Vargas, Jr.*
 - o *Velma Spencer*
- ♦ Present at special education director regional meetings
- ♦ Communicate more effectively w/VR directors
- ♦ Training early in school year
- ♦ Present at Talk with ADE
- ♦ ESS consultants to market agreement
- ♦ Regional officers as contact info
- ♦ Present at charter conference
- ♦ Present at charter director meetings
- ♦ Express importance to VR offices (buy in)
- ♦ Clearly express what agreement does not do (is/is not)
- ♦ Tie-in to new teacher orientation at school sites
- ♦ Monitor by ESS consultants for knowledge of document
- ♦ Hold people accountable
- ♦ More frequent follow-up
 - o Multi-task
 - o Variety of avenues/methods
- ♦ Work more closely/train federal programs at ADE
 - o Carl Perkins
 - o Title I
- ♦ Training with all therapists and behavioral health case managers re: agreement (*Amy*)
- ♦ Train to address need of 504-eligible students
 - o General education
 - o School psychologists
 - o Counselors

2. **Does this agreement provide appropriate guidance to schools and VR with the referral process for students with disabilities (both IDEA and 504 eligible) who may need assistance with the transition from school to work?**
 - ♦ Resource to put together Letter of Understanding
 - o *Pete Vargas, Jr.*
 - o *Larry Powers*
 - ♦ Training on “Order of Selection” and impact
 - ♦ Training with advocates (*Skip*)
 - ♦ Workgroup to facilitate discussion of what can/can’t be done
 - ♦ Training with advocates
 - ♦ Training parents/PTIs/PINS/PALS
 - ♦ Review curriculum developed by VR/schools
 - o *Chris Harmon and Larry Powers to bring to next meeting*
3. **Does this agreement provide information to parents and students regarding expected services from schools and VR during the transition process?**
 - ♦ Training parents/PTIs/PINS/PALS
4. **The Interagency Agreement outlines the transition programming provided by VR.**
5. **The agreement discusses the coordination of the Individualized Education Program and the Individualized Plan for Employment.**
6. **The agreement discusses different types of agreements schools can enter into with VR to provide services to students eligible for VR services.**

Questions 4, 5 and 6 are covered under #1 responses